THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS'

MILLENNIAL STAR.

"Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish: for I work a work in your days, a work in which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you."—ACTS 13: 41. HAB. 1: 5.

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CHARITY AND BENEVOLENCE.

BY ELDER JAMES E. TALMAGE.

SERMON DELIVERED IN SALT LAKE CITY TABERNACLE.

THE opportunity of listening to missionaries just home from their field of labor is of frequent occurrence here, and yet I doubt not the pleasure is ever fresh, and that the majority of those who come here from Sabbath to Sabbath for purposes of worship are pleased to hear from those who have so recently come from distant fields of missionary labor.

The missionary work of this Church is a subject of great surprise and wonder to the people of the world. It is a species of that benevolent labor which is so characteristic of the present age. The present is a day of professed benevolence. Many of the wealthy of the world vie with and strive to outdo one another in benevolent actions. As to whether all of them are inspired by a feeling of true love for their fellows, or are actuated with a desire to appear liberal and great, and thus to win the praises of men, I am disposed to be silent; but this I know, that none of their good deeds will lack of reward, and none of their kind acts will go unnoticed of God. But one of the most stupendous undertakings of a benevolent nature with which I am acquainted in the world to-day, is the spectacle presented by this Church sending out hundreds and thousands of missionaries, calling them from the field, the workshop, the counter and the school; causing them to leave, and leave them willingly, their associations at home, and to give up for the time being the opportunity and hope of worldly advancement, that they may go and do what they consider their duty in carrying the word of God unto those who have not yet heard it. While I can readily understand that many people may say that the Latter-day Saints are mistaken, may refuse to accept their tenets of faith, and may

go so far as to say we are a bigoted, a deluded people; and while I can respect the opinion of a man who may make such a remark as that, believing that perhaps he has not seen all, I confess to you that I have no respect for the opinion of any man who says that this people are insincere. Their sincerity is abundantly attested, and has been so from the days of the early persecution down to the present.

They are regarded by many as a very unpopular people, and some of the missionaries who go into distant parts of the world find that the word of their unpopularity has gone before. I do not grieve over this fact; for long ago I recognized that popularity is not always a test of worth, nor of value. I remember that when the Nazarene Himself lived in the flesh He was followed openly by but few; and in that day if the voice of the majority could have taken as the truth, the verdict would have gone forth that the Word of God had come to naught, and that the labors of Him who called Himself the Christ were futile. He had been hounded to His tomb, His followers had to a great extent been scattered, and according to the judgment of men failure had followed His efforts.

While I believe in the voice of the majority under certain circumstances, I claim the right of my own opinion in accordance with that voice or in direct opposition to it, as I choose. I do not expect to see this Church popular in the very near future, in the sense of being the Church of the multitude. I do not expect to see the majority of the people upon the face of the earth taking upon themselves the obligations and making the sacrifices required for membership in the Church of the living God. This unpopularity is oftimes expressed by the sneering appellations given to our people. By the way, only a Sabbath ago I was met upon the street by a visitor to this city, who seemed to be intelligent and sincere. He asked me if I could tell him at what time of the day the "Mormons" would meet for worship. I imparted the information, and answered one or two other questions, in the course of which he learned that I myself had the honor of membership in the Church. Then he hesitatingly and in a somewhat embarrassed manner offered an opology for having referred to the people as "Mormons," understanding, as he said he did, that this was somewhat of a nickname. I told him he was right to some extent; for the term "Mormons" had been applied to this people by their enemies, and perhaps rested upon the fact that a very prominent publication was put forth in the early days of the Church, even before the Church was fully organized in fact, the fame of which book had spread abroad—the Book of Mormon—but I assured him that no member of this Church would feel at all offended at him or anyone else for applying that term in a proper spirit. As a matter of fact, we know that while given by those who did not wish us well, it has come to be known as the commonest designation of this people, and to-day we are not ashamed of it. It has found its way into the dictionaries of the age, and we take no offense if it be written without quotation marks. It is better known by far than is the official name of this organization, viz., Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

But as I talked with my friend, my mind went back to the record of instances of nicknames of old. I remembered how a few followers of Christ

at Antioch had the epithet "Christian" thrown at them with all the bitterness and rancor that their enemies could inject into the word; and I remembered, too, how these same followers of the lowly Jesus had taken up that name and sanctified it, until to-day I know of but one greater honor than that attached to being called a Christian, and that greater one is being a Christian.

This people—the "Mormon" people, if you please—are unpopular in the eyes of the world, and in their unpopularity, they see to some extent the manifestation of the hand of God. They are pleased with their lot, and they are willing to do all they can to enlighten those who know little about them. But this unpopularity, I want to assure you, is associated with ignorance. I speak knowingly, for it has been my good fortune to travel amongst many nations and to meet people of many countries and many ways of thinking, and I have found that the basis of the unpopularity of the Latter-day Saints is usually ignorance.

I do not care much what my friends think of me if I am sure that the more they know of me the better they will think of me. I am willing that their opinion shall be a poor one if they do not know me well. I am willing to have an ill name at the hands of those who know little about me, if I can have a good name from those who know me best. There are some organizations, as there are some men, whose reputation suffers with increase of knowledge and with better acquaintance; but I have found amongst the thinkers of the day, those who are not swayed by every wind of popular prejudice, that if they know anything about this people at all they have recognized some of our virtues. This fact I would emphasize: In an experience extending over quite a number of years and including travel in many countries, I have never had to bow my head or hide my face in shame because I was a "Mormon." I like it to be known where I go that I am a "Mormon." I force my views on no man. I do not press my belief into the face of others. If they want to know what I believe they can find out for the asking, and I will be very pleased to tell them. But I do not feel that I belong to any low-down church, and I do not think my brethren and sisters feel so either. The proudest recommendation I have had in the course of long travel has been that I am a member of this Church. It has brought me kind treatment; it has brought me in contact with intelligent men; it has been a means of education to me to a marked extent, and from the standpoint of worldly things alone I would be foolish if I thought of giving it up.

You have listened to personal testimonies from our brethren just home from the missionary field, and I want to add my testimony to theirs. I go back to a remark made a few minutes ago, that benevolence is characteristic of the present development of the ages; and I would add that benevolence has always been an essential feature of the work of Christ. The visiting stranger to whom I have referred talked with me about some of the organizations of this Church, and he was particularly impressed by the mention of one, the purpose of which is expressed by the name—the relief society. It is one of the secondary, subordinate organizations in the Church, I admit—one of the "helps and governments" spoken of in the

Scriptures. It is composed of sisters, young and not so young, banded together for the purpose of carrying relief to those who are in distress. I expressed to him, and I venture to repeat now, an analogy which forced itself upon my attention at the moment between that organization and the Church as a whole. Just as these sisters of the Relief Society, clad in the mantle of charity, go from house to house seeking out the hungry, the weak and the distressed, and giving unto them such aid as is within their reach, so go the Elders of this Church, clothed with the Holy Priesthood, from country to country, from nation to nation, along the highways and the byways of country places, threading the streets of great cities, going down into the darksome quarters, hunting out those who are in need of spiritual refreshment and help, and offering them the living water of the Gospel, the bread of life—the nourishment that gives strength, hope and vitality. As I think of it further, I find that Christ Himself came to give relief—relief to a suffering world; to raise the burden of sin that was crowding down and crushing those who then lived. You will find that the work of God always has as some of its foundation stones benevolence, love for humanity, kindness to one another, and exercise in such work will always bring happiness. I would be suspicious of the Elder who did not find happiness in his labors as a missionary. You have heard to-day that pleasure was not always at hand; but I have become convinced that there is a radical difference between happiness and pleasure. If I cannot have both, I will take the happiness, and let the pleasure go; and there is happiness in doing what we know to be right.

I have oftimes heard some surprise expressed that the Latter-day Saints, believing as they do, professing as they do, that they are the chosen people of God, and that although a battle is being waged, and is going to be waged, victory for them is assured—I say I have heard surprise expressed that a people with such convictions work so hard and send so many missionaries out into the world, when they know that the Lord is going to do it all anyway. Yes, they are a very practical people, and they believe the Lord is going to do it for them if they will do all they can for themselves. They have no faith that the Lord is going to do for them what He requires them to do for themselves. You know, this old idea that we are to be saved by the grace of God in spite of all we do ourselves, is being relegated to oblivion. Thinking and enlightened men among the sects of the day have not much use for it just now. Creeds are being revised, and that idea of irresponsibility is being cast out. It used to be thought that if we did anything for ourselves we surely could not have so much faith in God, and so much gratitude to Him for what He did for us. Why, it is only one other step to the great extreme that used to be held by professed teachers of the Gospel, that the greater sinner a man was the more glory God would have in saving him, and that it would be a shame for all men to be righteous—it would rob God of His glory; that He was going to save the sinner and cleanse the filthy—all for the honor of His name. We will have to do something for ourselves, and it is no longer regarded as sacrilegious to say it in Christian communities generally. In proportion to that which we do for ourselves will the Lord do for us. We will have to

pay the price for His help, and the coin with which we have to pay is earnest effort, individual work. I admit that the wages offered are enormous; that the investment is a most flattering one; that the returns are almost incalculable; nevertheless, the man that does not invest and will not work for these returns, I hardly believe he is going to get them; and we are going to learn after a while that it is no less an act of the grace of God when He helps one who is trying to help himself, than it would be if He stretched out His hand to help one who would never do anything for himself.

[TO BE CONTINUED].

THE RELIGION OF SOVEREIGNS.

THE public announcement made by the Czar of the pleasure which he and his wife have felt in being permitted by Providence to offer up prayers to heaven in Moscow instead of St. Petersburg, was a curious incident. The visit itself was most natural, the strange illusion that prayer reaches GOD more quickly from one place than another being one that has existed for ages in all lands, and among men professing all creeds, and the Emperor and Empress having an urgent impulse to pray. They deeply desire a son, whose birth would put an end to the palace intrigues which in all absolute monarchies are fostered by the absence of a direct heir, and who would secure the throne to their direct descendants, and they greatly fear lest, as their children have hitherto all been daughters, they should continue to be daughters until the end. There is a popular superstition in Russia as in England, that this often happens. Daughters can inherit the Russian throne, but by an unwise family law they inherit only when the male line has become extinct, and as there are many Grand Dukes, sons are almost as much desired as in countries governed by the Salic Law, or in English families under a strict entail. The visit is, therefore, as we have said, most natural, but the publication of the Imperial thanks to the Almighty for permission to make it is unusual, and suggests in the Czar a certain earnestness of belief which throws much light, and, on the whole, pleasant light, upon a character as yet but little understood. Kings are rarely pious, though they are still more rarely unbelievers. There have been plenty of bad men upon European thrones, and the lives of few Kings will bear study through an ethical microscope, but we can recall only one, KING FREDERICK the GREAT of PRUSSIA, who was a scoffing unbeliever. He even sneered at the British Ambassador for saying that he would do something or other by "the help of God," and asked, with his nose in the air, whether the English counted God among their allies. "Yes, your Majesty," was the crushing reply, "and the only ally who asks no subsidy from us." The temper displayed in FREDERICK'S jest is, however, most unusual among Sovereigns, and though when they win victories they are often accused of hypocrisy for publicly professing their belief that GOD rules all, it is more probable, in spite of their usual conduct, that the profession has been sincere. Many sinners believe, and Sovereigns, who perceive so plainly the complexity of human affairs, and the powerlessness even of the great-

est to control events, must feel more than any men the necessity for aid and guidance from some power higher than themselves. Who else is to give success to plans which are so large that foresight fails, and orders must constantly be given the future effect of which it is impossible to know? It is certain, at all events, that they all say so, and we see no reason for supposing that they are all liars, or are only going through a form. On the contrary, the loneliness of Sovereigns, who all, however much advised, think that they govern, their consciousness of a separate position, and their belief that when all is said they must bear rule by some special permission, and therefore must have some peculiar relation to the Most High, all tend to make them at least strongly convinced Theists. Even NAPOLEON, who had neither morals, pity, nor remorse, pointed to the stars, and asked a sceptical Marshal "who made them." The more absolute the Monarch the stronger would be this faith in him, until we reach the really pathetic belief of ALEXANDER III., who, knowing himself to be incompetent, still governed well and strongly because, as he said, he believed that GOD would never have appointed a man like himself to rule without intending to give him aid. Beyond Theism we suspect they very rarely go. The pride of the priest affronts the pride of the Monarch. True Christianity would be too much of a restraint, and would in many countries involve submissions which offend the *amour propre* of the throne. There have been many Catholic Kings, but they have rarely been submissive to Papal orders—even CHARLES V. was recalcitrant—while Protestant Sovereigns have usually regarded churches as institutions they were bound to protect rather than to obey. A few Monarchs, like our own JAMES II., have professed an entire faith, even when it tended to their own visible hurt—he was a stupid tyrant, but that side of him has never been fairly brought out—but the majority have, as we read history, believed strongly in GOD and His direct control of human affairs, and have left all other dogmas to be disputed over by meaner men. They have been Theists, not Christians. We should think, on the whole, that NICHOLAS II. belonged to the minority, and not only believed in GOD, but in the teaching of the Holy Orthodox Church.—*Spectator.*

TEA DRINKERS' DISEASES.

IT is not a little curious that the diseases arising from the wrong use of tea should be met with in greater frequency in countries foreign to its growth. It might have been supposed that where production went on, there would be found those evils that attend the consumption of tea in their greatest extent; but such does not appear to be the case. The diseases due to tea are well known to doctors, but the public seem to be strangely indifferent to the teachings of their medical advisers in these matters. Recently, in France, M. Eloy has reminded medical men how vast is the number of diseases owning an allegiance to the dominion of Queen Tea. The list of headings in M. Eloy's paper is well calculated to arouse attention, and, we hope, to lead to some abatement of this widespread disorder. America and England are the two countries that are afflicted

most with the maladies arising from the excessive consumption of tea. Individuals may suffer in a variety of ways. It is customary to speak of acute, subacute, and chronic "theism"—a form that has no connection with theological matters. It is possible to be a "theic" by profession or a "theic" by passion. The predominance of nervous symptoms is a characteristic of theism; general excitation of the functions of the nervous system may be observed; or the weakness may be noted more especially in the brain as distinguished from the spinal cord. Perversion of the sense of hearing is not at all an uncommon symptom—patients hearing voices that have no real or objective existence. The irritability that overtakes women so frequently may sometimes be clearly traced to an excessive indulgence in afternoon tea. It is a mistake to suppose that it is the poor seamstress who is the chief sufferer from theism. No doubt the tannin which tea that has been standing long contains, does a great amount of mischief, but the derangement that it causes hardly belongs to that class of diseases with which we are at present concerned. Rather does theism belong to that genus of disease in which morphinism, caffeism, and vanillism are found. The habit of tea drinking is one that grows on its victims like the similar ones of opium or alcohol. Taken in strict moderation, and with due precautions in the mode of preparation, tea is, like alcohol, a valuable stimulant; in its abuse there is also a certain analogy. There is hardly a morbid symptom which may not be traceable to tea as its cause. This is a fact that general practitioners often use to their own satisfaction and to their patient's advantage, if it happen to be that kind of patient who does not object to make some sacrifice in order to be rid of troubles.—*Lancet.*

TOM'S GOLD DUST.—"That boy knows how to take care of his gold dust," said Tom's uncle often to himself, and sometimes aloud. Tom went to college, and every account they heard of him he was going ahead, laying a solid foundation for the future. "Certainly," said his uncle, "certainly; that boy, I tell you, knows how to take care of his gold dust."

Gold dust! Where did Tom get gold dust? He was a poor boy. He had not been to California. He never was a miner. When did he get gold dust?

Ah! he has seconds and minutes, and these are the gold dust of time, specks and particles of time which boys and girls and grown-up people are apt to waste and throw away. Tom knew their value. His father had taught him that every speck and particle of time was worth its weight in gold, and his son took care of them as if they were. Take care of your gold dust!—*Young Reaper.*

NOT A VAIN HOPE.—"I hope there will come a time when truth will require no more martyrs, and justice no more victims. I hope that out of the shapeless social star-dust of to-day some planet of plenty and peace will be formed. I hope that in the wash and swirl of the ocean of time some fair pearls of knowledge, liberty, friendliness, and happiness may be cast upon the beach of society. I hope that at some time, instead of slaying our prophets and saviors, we shall know how to hear and value them."—*Twentieth Century.*

THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS' MILLENNIAL STAR.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 11, 1900.

A LIVING ORGANIZATION.

ANY living organism needs to be supplied with those elements peculiarly suited to itself, that it may become perpetuated in its own sphere of action, for when growth and development ceases, decay becomes established, and death eventually supervenes. And yet it is a curious fact that improper aliment will produce death as readily as the withholding thereof, as has been often demonstrated from animals to man, and from man to nations.

While pondering this proposition and its applicability to things of man—of his creation—the idea seemed to be peculiarly applicable to things above or beyond man; yet things in which he is most decidedly interested (or should be) in this life and in the life to come.

It cannot be admitted that human wisdom adapts "means to an end," and yet that in divine things there should be no such adaptation; but that its purposes should be vague or undecided, or that while an aim was inevitable, the details for securing success should be of no moment, or were left to chance.

Now in the revelation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, there is a certitude which bespeaks design. He possessed the wisdom to declare it, He taught those who were appointed to succeed Him, and for fear of error when personal ministration was impossible, he promised, and in that promise guaranteed, that all the auxiliaries for a continuance thereof should be available as they might need. They were not left to themselves, and we know not that they had any writings for their guidance in His absence.

The Apostles were promised the inspiration and revelation of that intelligent spirit which should "bring all things to their remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you," and "show them things to come." They did not refer to any book to prove their authority, to regulate the Church, or to perform the functions of their Apostleship. If in doubt, an appeal was made, in this way. At one time, the Holy Ghost said, "separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them." When the quorum of the twelve was to be filled, they prayed, "Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, show which of these two thou hast chosen," and by this spirit many things were made manifest as necessity required, whether it referred to Peter's visit to Cornelius, the visit of Ananias to Saul, Paul's impression as to his going up to prison, or the still more strange revelations of later date, when it was shown to Peter, to Paul and to John respectively, that a great departure from the faith should occur, which

they wrote and testified of in language which is as unmistakable as it is surprising.

No wonder that these men, brave, defiant almost as they were, should have made no effort to perpetuate the Apostleship, or to stay the spirit of prophecy within themselves, which by the Holy Spirit indicated "the falling away." They doubtless remembered during all the stages of departure, and when death was inevitable for the whole, as well as for thousands of their devoted disciples, that "the Kingdom of Heaven suffereth violence, *and the violent take it by force.*" It was so made manifest, and so it surely came to pass.

The "latter-days," much as some then thought, had not yet dawned, that kingdom which is "to stand for ever," and not to be given unto another people, evidently did not apply to them, nor refer to the age in which they lived. Man had yet to ask: "Where is the promise of His coming, for since the Fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning."

That promised Spirit of Revelation, given in the olden time, has been repeated in this day, even from the day that the Prophet received the first revelation until he sealed his testimony in martyrdom, the heavens were open to him and to his people. He received "line upon line, and precept upon precept," not always every principle in its fulness at the first, but rather as the dawning thereof, and then its revelation in fulness. He did not establish the Church at once, nor by the reading of the New Testament, he was not guided by books, precedents were, we believe, all unfamiliar to him, and when he was assured of his departure, he laid the responsibility of the future work where it belonged. He had formed, under God, the living Church, he had received the authority of God, and had conferred it by divine direction upon others. They became entitled to the same inspiration, and revelation has continued from that day unto the present.

The exigencies of change and growth have needed this, human wisdom is inadequate to build up a growing, permanent institution like "the Kingdom of God." Conditions arise without precedent, deductions grow out of principles which appear to be new, and revelations of truth are made which are the logical sequence of things already revealed and accepted. The necessities of to-day cannot be met by books, the clothing of the child is not used by the growing man. Order reveals itself through experience, and even the prophet of to-day would not baptize, indiscriminately, for the dead; not that fundamental doctrines are contravened; not that any authority can substitute sprinkling for immersion, or make that ordinance simply the door into the Church, when it has been already declared to be for the remission of sins; not that the laying on of hands can be set aside, or that Prophets and Apostles can be dispensed with; not that every question of to-day can be solved by documents of half a century ago; not that men can sit down complacently as the sectarian world does, and say, that no more revelation is needed by the Church, at least. *It asks the word of the Lord now, to-day.* A living, growing power needs the living word, for far too often "the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life."

If the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is not in possession of this heavenly communication, if this divine life is not so fed, corrected, sustained, then "Mormonism" is a myth, its Priesthood is a farce, its pretensions are infamous and deceptive, and its anticipations will be as the dew before the sun!

Alas, alas, when men have to declare that there is "a famine for the word of the Lord." It is a dark day when teachers can say, "the Lord hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep, and hath closed your eyes, the prophets and your rulers, the seers hath he covered." This has never been said of modern Israel, *they have the word of the Lord, they have the testimony of Jesus, their confidence and trust in God and in their leaders was never greater than it is to-day*, for from every habitation, as from those therein of every age, the prayers of the righteous are ascending day and night, that this inestimable blessing may be continued and increased; that the Kingdom of God may be fully established upon the earth, according to the promises of "that choice seer," Joseph Smith, and his successors.

No man who has lived in Zion for "lo, these many years," but can testify to the facts and to the experiences which they have had. They know, have known the prominent men of Zion, touched maybe with the infirmities of the flesh—made as was Elias, "subject to like passions as we are," yet acknowledged and honored of God, as thousands testify, for they, by the same spirit of inspiration have had this made manifest unto them, beyond contradiction and beyond dispute!

N.

CLERKS of Conferences would confer a favor by sending in reports of their services for publication as soon as possible after the close thereof.

CONFERENCE NOTICE.—The Manchester Semi-Annual Conference will be held in the Co-operative Hall, Middleton, on Sunday, October 21, 1900. Services will commence at 10:30 a.m., and 2:30 and 6 p.m. The Presidency of the European Mission will be present.

LONDON CONFERENCE.

THE Semi-annual Meetings of the London Conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, convened in the Town Hall, Roseberry Avenue, Clerkenwell, N., on Sunday, October 7th, 1900.

There were in attendance: Presidents Platte D. Lyman, James L. McMurrin and Henry W. Naisbitt of the European Mission; President H. B. Thompson, Scottish Conference; Elder Joseph H. Page, Sheffield Conference; Elders Preston D. Richards and D. H. Y. McAllister, Nottingham Conference; Elder Elias W. Doney, Bristol Conference; Elder Wm. Beazer, Newcastle Conference, and President Hindley, with the Traveling Elders and Lady Missionaries of the London Conference.

Meeting at 10:30 a.m. (Minor Hall). Singing "Now let us rejoice in the day of salvation." Prayer by Elder W. Loveday.

President Hindley expressed his pleasure in meeting with so many

of the brethren and sisters, and that under so favorable circumstances, and he extended a cordial welcome to all.

President Naisbitt spoke upon the Authorities of the Church, the obligation of sustaining the same, and the responsibility of so doing.

Sister Lydia D. Alder spoke upon the different organizations in the Church, and showed how each were in touch with the other, and the harmony which thus prevailed.

The general authorities of the Church, and the Presidency of the European Mission, were presented and unanimously sustained. Elder J. R. Hindley was unanimously sustained as President of the London Conference, with the following Traveling Elders and Lady Missionaries in the following districts as assigned to them: J. R Stubbs, Orson Day, David N. White, Jos. Reeder, D. W. Parratt, Sisters Jean Clara Holbrook and Alice Sargent in North London; Robert Sherwood, Fredk. Rasband, R. P. Carlisle, H. G. Morrell and Sister Lydia D. Alder in Stratford; Alfred Gardiner, Heber H. Davis and David Butler in Ashford; Jas. A. Leishman and A. E. Fawns in Dunstable; Wm. E. Purdy, C. G. Berry, Jacob Robertson and H. C. Parker in Bedford; J. C. White, W. B. Dougall and E. J. Taylor in Ashford; Chas. H. Smith and A. L. F. McDermott in Faversham; E. Watkins and Jos. Davies in Sittingbourne; Ed. T. Shepherd, Geo. A. Blanthorn and Geo. R. Scott in Southampton; F. T. Bailey and W. H. Grimshaw in Deal. George Ellis was also sustained as President of the North London branch, with Wm. G. Bruce as counselor. It was also unanimously agreed to sustain all the Local Priesthood in the London Conference, and that we sustain each other.

The statistical report of the past six months, ending 29th September, 1900, was read: Missionaries from Zion—High Priests, 2; Seventies, 29; Lady Missionaries, 3. Local Priesthood—Elders, 26; Priests, 14; Teacher, 1; Deacons, 9; members, 461; total officers and members, exclusive of missionaries from Zion, 511; children under eight years of age, 70; total number of souls, 581. Tracts distributed—from door to door, 82,718; in open-air meetings or otherwise, 21,580. Books distributed—sold, 114; loaned, 266; given away, 275. Strangers' houses visited—with first tracts, 24,950; by first invitation, 467; by re-invitation, 614. Gospel conversations, 3,544. Meetings held—hall, 363; cottage, 134; out-door, 395; Sunday school sessions, 62; Bible classes, 185; Priesthood, 29. Meetings attended—indoors, 2,425; out-doors, 1,308. Baptisms 31; confirmations, 31; ordinations, 3. Children blessed—of Church members, 11; non-members, 1. Emigrated over eight years of age, 8. Died—over eight years of age, 4; under eight years, 1. Received, 1; removed, 1. New subscribers for the the STAR, 20.

President Hindley made a few remarks upon the necessity of those who embrace the Gospel of Jesus Christ living up to its requirements, and urged all to renewed diligence and faithfulness.

Singing "For the strength of the hills we bless thee." Dismissed with prayer by President Geo. Ellis.

2:30 p.m. (Minor Hall). Singing "The time is far spent." Prayer by R. M. Bruce Thomas.

President Thompson and Sister Alice Sargent bore their testimonies as to the truth of the Gospel.

President Lyman spoke upon the Necessity of Continuous Revelation for the perfecting of the Saints, and President McMurrin spoke upon the First Principles of the Gospel.

Singing "The Spirit of God like a fire is burning." Dismissed with prayer by Elder P. D. Richards.

6:30 p.m. (Council Chamber). Singing "Come, come ye saints." Prayer by Elder W. G. Bruce.

Sister Jean Clara Holbrook spoke upon the condition of the women of Utah, and testified that the Sisters had left their homes for the purpose of bearing testimony that the ladies of Utah are as free, and far more respected, than any, upon the face of the whole earth.

President Naisbitt occupied the remaining time, and dwelt upon religion as taught throughout the world, that each denomination had some truth, and testified that by embracing the Gospel as taught by the Latter-day Saints, no man was required to lay aside any truth he had acquired in these denominations, for the reason that the Gospel taught by the Latter-day Saints is the true Gospel of Jesus Christ, and as such includes all truth.

Singing "O My Father, Thou that dwellest."

The Elders met in Priesthood meeting on Monday morning, at 97, Farleigh Road, Stoke-Newington, N., and reported their labors and received valuable advice and instructions from the Presidency.

The Elders, Saints, and friends met in the Minor Hall, Clerkenwell Town Hall, on Monday evening, and enjoyed some hours in social intercourse.

Throughout the whole Conference a very enjoyable and profitable time was spent, the Spirit of God being poured out in rich abundance upon all, and all feel to thank our Heavenly Father for the rich blessings He has bestowed upon us. Peace and unity is our portion, and God is blessing the labors of His servants in the London Conference.

WM. G. BRUCE, Clerk of Conference.

THE GARDEN OF EDEN.

AN exchange, in answer to a question, devotes a paragraph to the various theories about the location of the Garden of Eden, remarking that any endeavor positively to identify the place at present is useless.

The brief description of the beautiful spot where man's first days on earth were spent, is found in the opening chapters of Genesis. It is stated that the Lord planted a garden in the eastern part of Eden. In this country a certain river was running, which, after having watered the garden, divided in four separate branches, Pison, Gihon, Hiddekel and Euphrates. The first of these rivers "compasseth" Havilah, a country famous for gold. The second "compasseth" Ethiopia; the third Assyria.

Commentators, who believe that the Mosaic narrative is historical, and should be understood literally, have naturally seized upon the name Euphrates and commenced their search for the garden somewhere near

the sources of that historic river; but the problem was to find a water system consisting of one stream that branched out in four, of which the Euphrates was one. The impossibility of solving this problem in a rational manner soon became apparent. True enough, if Hiddekel is identical with the Tigris, two of the Eden rivers would apparently be accounted for; but the second river, Gihon, which is said to have passed through Ethiopia, in Africa, could never have been a branch of the Euphrates system. Besides, modern researches have pretty well proved that the two rivers, Euphrates and Tigris, now united in their course for some distance, were once two separate rivers, a fact which contradicts the theory that the Hiddekel of Moses is the Tigris of later historians.

Luther, with the clearness of thought that generally characterized his mode of dealing with vexatious questions, pointed out that the Deluge had probably changed the topography of the country to such an extent that no effort to locate the garden by the description in Genesis would avail. With this view once adopted the scholars have been left free to follow their own fancies in their search for the home of our first parents, and almost every part of the globe has been suggested. The most general opinion has been that the cradle of mankind stood somewhere in Asia; but others guess at the South Sea Islands, and others even at Scandinavia.

It is clear enough that with the ordinary means of research the question will ever be unsolved. But here, as so often, revelation comes to the aid of science, and designates clearly where the land of Eden and the garden were located. Josephus is right in considering Eden a vast country; but he is wrong in locating it between the Ganges in India, and the Nile in Africa. According to revelations given in this generation through Joseph the Seer, neither Asia nor Africa, but this continent, America, contains what was once called the land of Eden in which the garden was planted. Here, on this continent, blessed above all others with liberty, light and the riches of the earth, Adam once dwelt. Here he blessed his sons and daughters, committing to them the knowledge of God and the power of the Priesthood. Here, on this continent, he builded an altar, and to this continent he shall again come, the Ancient of Days, to visit his people.

There is no contradiction in the supposition that Eden was located in America, and the fact that the names Euphrates, Ethiopia and Assyria are attached to rivers and countries on other continents. All these names may originally have been given to places, rivers, cities, valleys, etc., in this country by Adam and his descendants. When these emigrated, they would naturally call new localities with familiar names, a practice which is known to be extensively carried out in our own day. This removes the difficulties about the names in the Biblical narrative. Revelation has thrown its light through the depths that to science seemed impenetrable.

The latest that has been published concerning Eden is the theory of Lieutenant Totten, which, however, is more curious than valuable. He thinks that at the time of Adam the earth was still surrounded by a luminous ring similar to that of Saturn. The four streams mentioned by Moses, he thinks, were four divisions of this luminous ring, which to the spectator were literally "encompassing" certain countries. This ring,

consisting of gaseous substances, gradually cooled, he thinks, and fell down on the earth, causing the great deluge.

But leaving all theories, the fact remains that man once was favored with the direct guidance of the Almighty, or revelation. This is man's natural privilege as God's child. The fall, and the voluntary stay in a fallen condition is what cuts off the direct communication between God and man. Salvation restores the communication, so necessary for the guidance of the individual, the Church and mankind. This is one great lesson of the garden of Eden.—*Deseret News.*

THE GOSPEL RECORDS.

As we come to a study of the Gospel records there is one curious fact that confronts us at the outset. We have nowhere anything that Christ wrote himself; neither is there any evidence of His "dictating" to others. This is properly so, for it is very important to members that He came not here to legislate, but to redeem. Christ is, Himself, the Gospel.

Now the question occurs, if Christ neither wrote any of the New Testament Scriptures, nor definitely authorized their writing, how did they come to be written, and how shall we regard them? In answer to this we must consider the circumstances under which the Scriptures were given to the world. Christ spent three years with His disciples, teaching them. It was their college course, as it were, and the subject of their study was—Christ. When He had finished His work He gave them a commission—preach the Gospel; the Gospel—the words and career of Jesus. The disciples carried out their instructions, their commission. They went forth to preach to all the people the message with which they had been instructed. About the middle of the first century they began to realize that conditions were changing, and that new methods must be adopted. The eye-witnesses of Christ could not live always; written records were necessary. It was then that the Scriptures began to be written, and the gospels as we have them now contain in substance the preaching of the various apostles. Investigation fixes the time when the four gospels were written as follows: Matthew, A.D. 50; Mark, A.D. 63; Luke A.D. 60, and John at the close of the first century. It is proven that all these writings were prized very highly, preserved carefully and copied. Thus we have preserved, in various institutions, old manuscripts of the Bible.

In the British Museum are the Alexandrine manuscripts, supposed to have been written A.D. 450. They are somewhat mutilated by age and wear, but contain portions of all the books of the New Testament. In the Pope's library, Rome, is a manuscript of A.D. 350, containing the entire New Testament, with the exception of Revelations and two or three Epistles. The Siniatic manuscript is preserved in the Imperial Library at St. Petersburg. It contains the New Testament complete, and was written A.D. 350.

But entirely aside from these ancient writings of the Bible we have numerous evidences of Christ and His mission upon the earth. Many old

manuscripts have been discovered testifying to the genuineness of the Gospel.

Tacitus, A.D. 64, in describing the burning of Rome—which was attributed to Nero—remarks that Nero, in order to put an end to the rumor that he had himself set the city on fire, accused and inflicted the severest punishments upon men whom, hated on account of their crimes, the populace called Christians. The author of this name was Christ, who in the reign of Tiberias, was put to death by Pontius Pilate, the procurator. The deadly superstition, checked for awhile, broke forth not only through Judea, the source of this evil, but through the city of Rome also, where all things wicked or shameful from every quarter meet and are practiced. At first, therefore, those were arrested who acknowledged that they were of that sect; then, through their information, a vast multitude were convicted, not so much on the charge of burning Rome, as of hatred of the human race.

Pliny, in A.D. 111, writes: "Many of every age, of every rank, of both sexes also, are summoned, and will be summoned, to trial. For not only through the cities, but also through the villages and the fields has the contagion of this superstition spread, which, it seems, can be checked and corrected. It is, indeed, very evident that the temples, which were almost entirely forsaken, begin to be frequented, and the appointed rites, that had for a long time been neglected, to be resumed, and victims everywhere are sold, of which hitherto purchasers were rarely found."

Justin Martyr, A.D. 139, says: "There is not, indeed, a single race of men, either of barbarians or of Greeks, by whatever name they may be called, whether dwellers in wagons, or who have no houses, or who are nomads dwelling in tents, among whom prayers and thanksgivings are not offered to the Father and Creator of the universe in the name of the crucified Jesus."

Tertullian, A.D. 200, writes in substance: "In whom else have all nations believed, but in Christ, who has already come?" He enumerates Parthians, Medes, Elamites, inhabitants of Mesopotamia, Armenia, Phrygia, Cappadocia, Pontus, Asia, Pamphilia, Egypt, of Africa, beyond Cyrene, and Rome. Also various nations of the Getuli, many in the confines of the Moors and the borders of Spain, various tribes of the Gauls, parts of the Britains, inaccessible to the Romans, portions of the Sarmatiane, Dacians, Germans, Scythians, and of many hostile races, and of many provinces and islands unknown to the Romans, which could not be enumerated. "If," says he, "we wished to act the part of open enemies, not that of concealed avengers only, would we lack numbers and forces?" Again he says: "We are of yesterday, and we have filled everything you have, your cities, your islands, citadels, free towns, your courts of justice, your very camps, tribes, decades, the palace, the senate, the forum; we have left you your temples only. We can count your armies; in one province the Christians will out-number them."—Rev. J. Henry.

In the man whose childhood has known caresses there is always a fibre of memory that can be touched to gentle issues.—George Eliot.